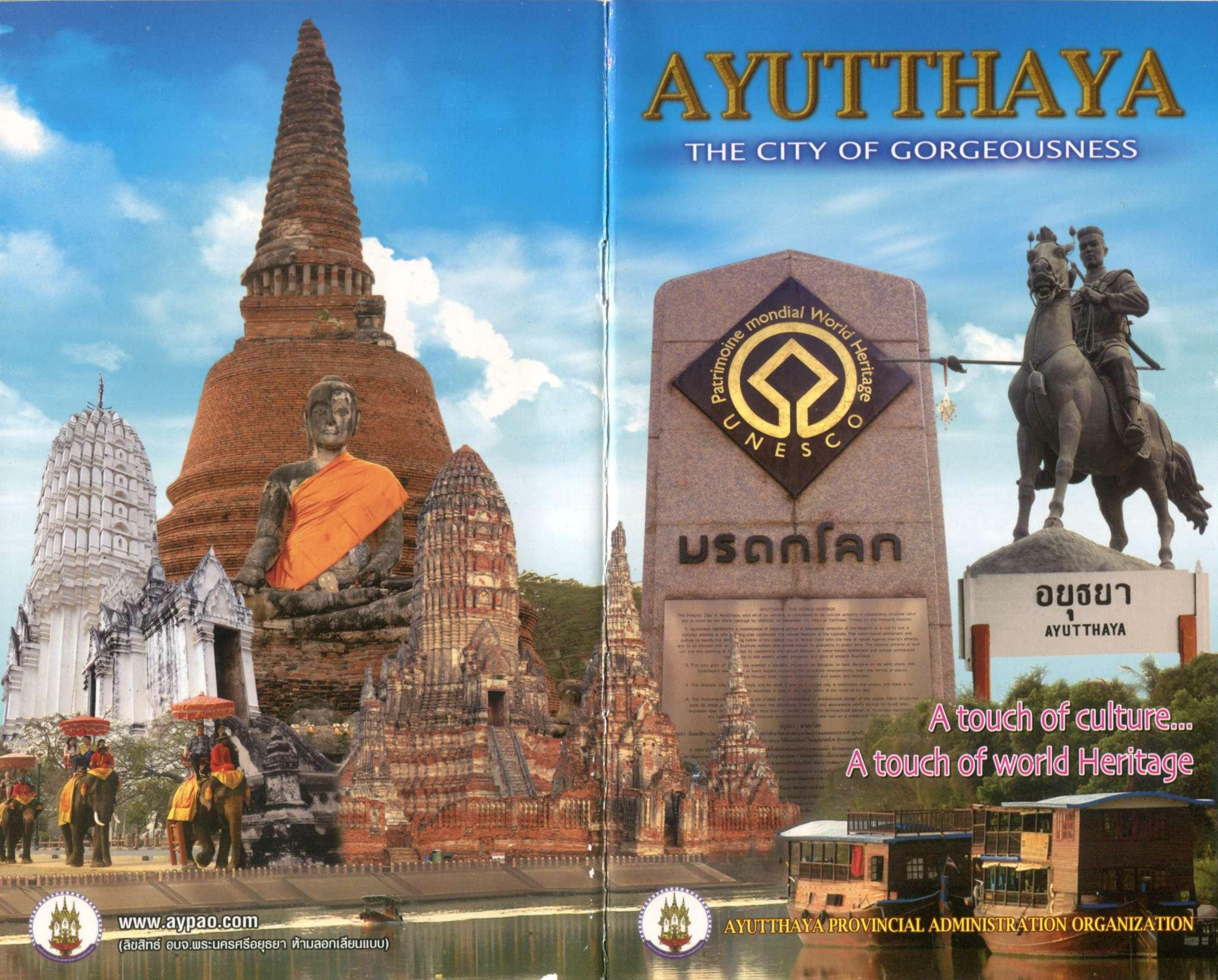
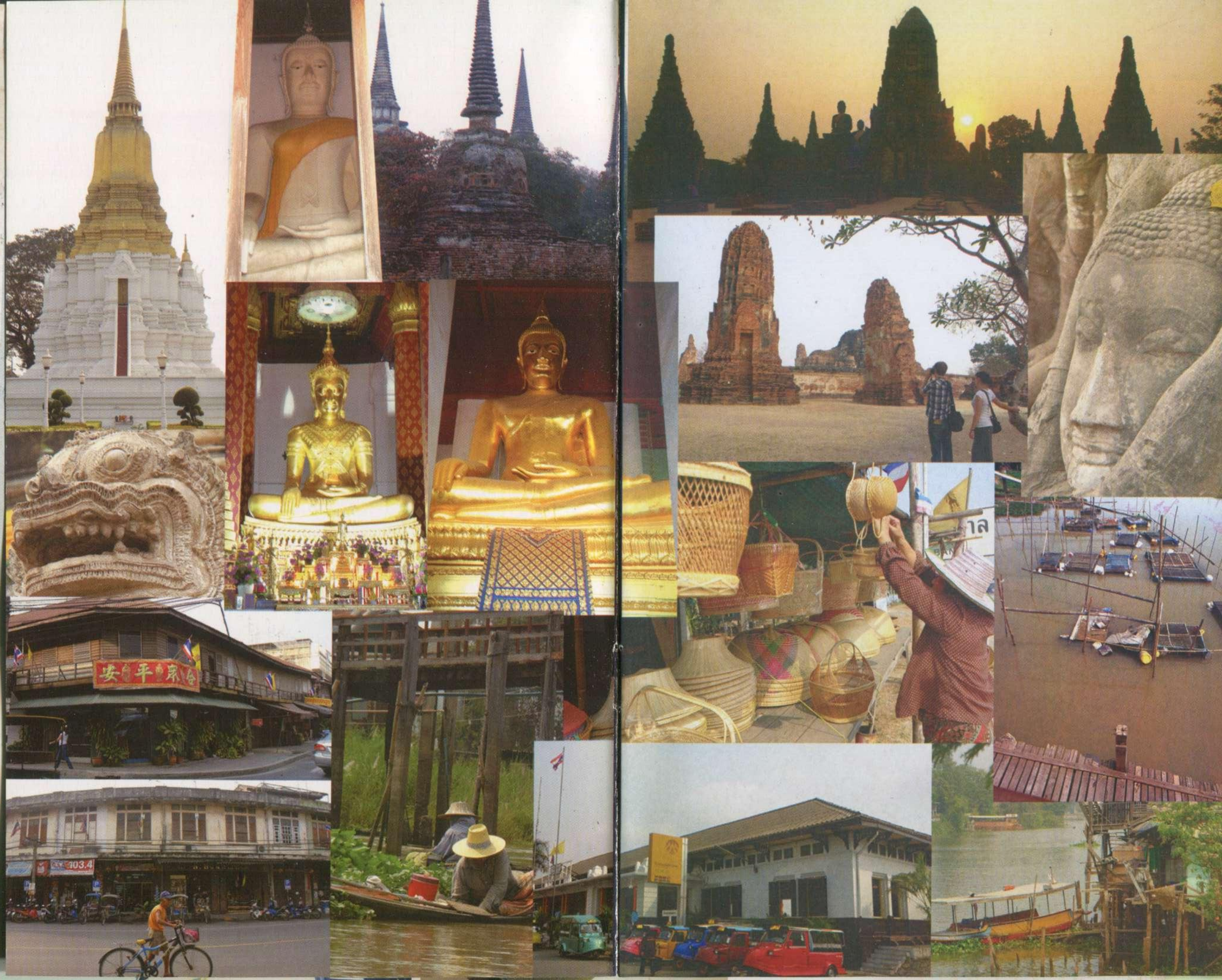
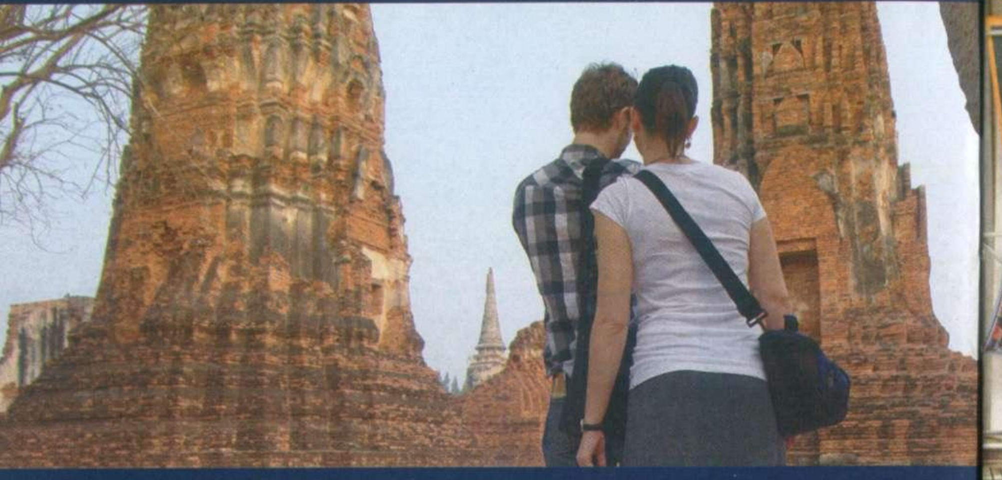


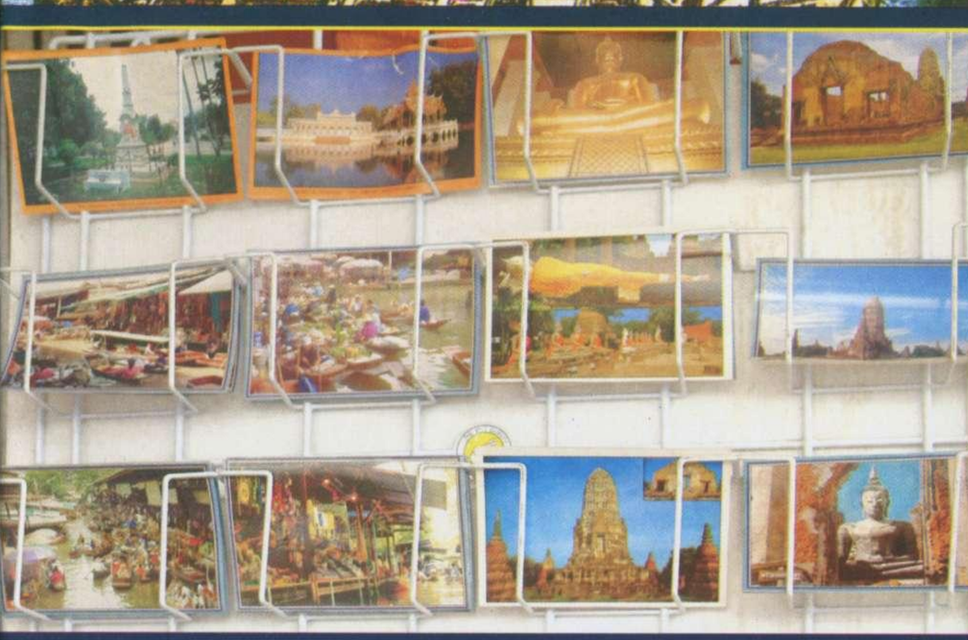
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AYUTTHAYA PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION ORGANIZATION


103.4



Contents





Ayutthaya

The ancient city of Ayutthaya, formally designated Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya was the Thai capital city for 417 years ago, and is one of Thailand's major tourist attractions.

Ayutthaya province is relatively small at 2,557 sq.km. and is easily accessible due to good road, rail and river connections and its proximity to Bangkok, Stradding the Chao Phraya River, the nation's principal waterway, the province is extremely important, as it was the Siamese capital for four centuries.

The city of Ayutthaya is 76 km. north of Bangkok and boasts numerous magnificent ruins from its days as the capital. Just to the south, in perfect condition, stands the royal palace of Bang Pa-In set in splendid gardens. The province is also noted for H.M. the Queen's Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre.

Many ancient ruins and art works can be seen in a city that was founded in 1350 by King U-Thong when the Thais were forced southwards by northern neighbours. During the period when Ayutthaya was capital, 33 kings and several dynasties ruled the kingdom, until the glittering city was sacked by the Burmese in 1767 , ruined and abandoned.

The extensive ruins and the historical records demonstrate that Ayutthaya was one of Southeast Asia's most prosperous cities. In recognition of its historical and cultural importance, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Historical Park, the location of the ruins adjacent to today's city, was declared a UNESCO'S World Heritage site in 1991.



Tourist Attractions and Places of Interest Palaces and Buildings

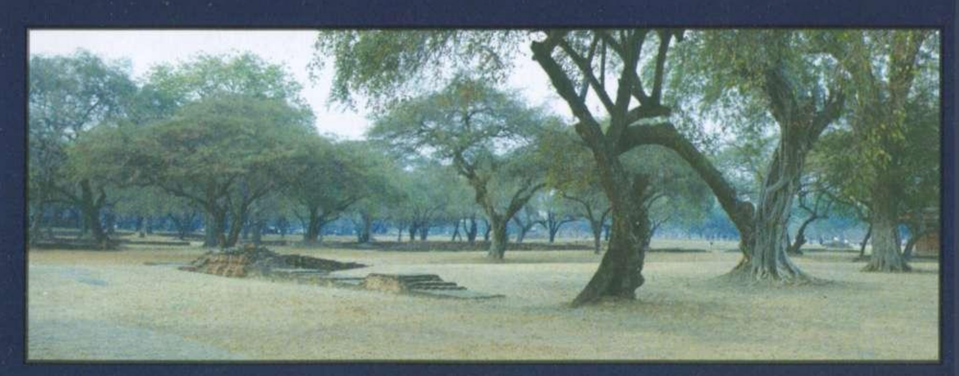
There were three palaces in Ayutthaya : Grand Palace, Chantharakasem Palace (The Front Palace), and Wang Lang (The Rear Palace). In addition, there were many other palaces and buildings for royal visits located outside the township area of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya such as Bang Pa-In Palace in Amphoe Bang Pa-In and Nakhon Luang Building in Amphoe Nakhon Luang.

GRAND PALACE

Currently called "Ancient Palace," the residential palace of every king, was located close to the city wall of Ayutthaya. A road passes by from Chantharakasem Palace which is two kilometers away to the north. The Ancient Palace is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Important buildings inside the grand palace compound are:

WIHAN SOMDET HALL

The front and rear gabled rooms were the largest, with smaller side gabled rooms. It was surrounded by a three-sided cloister and was used for various royal ceremonies such as coronations. This was the first building constructed in Ayutthaya that was ornamented with gold leavers.



BANYONG RATTANAT HALL

Formerly known by the name of "Phra Thinang Thaisa" it was located in the back compound of the grand palaced on an island in a pond. It had a four-gabled roof architecture.



CHANTHARAKASEM OR FRONT PALACE

Located on the bank of the Pa Sak River, this palace was built during the reign of King Maha Thammaracha, the 17th Ayutthaya monarch, for his son's residence (King Naresuan). Like other ruins, the palace was destroyed by the Burmese and left unrepaired for a long time, King Mongkut of the present Chakkri Dynasty had it reconstructed for this residence during occasional visits to Ayutthaya. Some of the interesting places are:

PHLAPPHLA CHATURAMUK

This wooden pavilion with a four gabled roof is near the east gate of the palace, Originally a residential place of King Mongkut during his visit to Ayutthaya, it later became the "Chantharakasem National Museum," under the responsibility of the Fine Arts Department. It is open every-



day except Mondays, Tuesdays and national holidays from 09.00-16.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.



PHIMAN RATTAYA HALL

This is a group of buildings located amidst the compound of the palace, which served as government offices and the Provincial Administrative Building for several years.

PHISAISANLAYALAK HALL

This is a four-storey tower located close to the western site of the palace. It was constructed during the reign of King Narai the Great, but was razed during the 2nd fall of Ayutthaya. It was reconstructed according to the original foundation is the fourth reign of the present dynasty. King Rama IV used the tower to observe the stars.

PALACE WALL AND GATE

They were constructed by the royal command of King Rama IV. The original foundation of the palace wall has been found through excavation, revealing that the original area was much larger than what is currently seen.

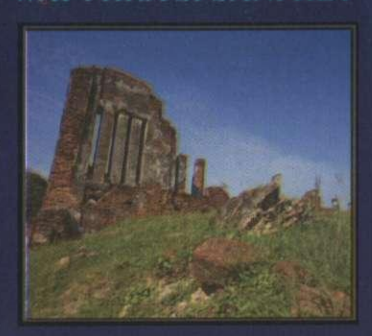


WANGLANG OR THE REAR PALACE

This palace is located closed to the western city wall of Ayutthaya. It was originally the royal garden. There was only one residen-

tial building in the entire area. The palace was constructed by the royal command of King Maha Thammaracha as a residense for his son (King Ekathotsarot) . Now, it has been reformed to Chedi Si Suriyothai

WAT PHRA SI SANPHET





This important and out standing monastery is located in the grand palace compound, like Wat Phra Si Rattanastsadaram (Wat Phra Kaeo) of Bangkok. It was used as a residential palace in the reign of King Ramathibodi I. When King Borom Trai Lokkanat commanded that new living quarters be built, this residential palace was dedicated as the royal chapel without monks and novice inhabitants. It is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.

WIHAN PHRA MONGKHON BOPHIT

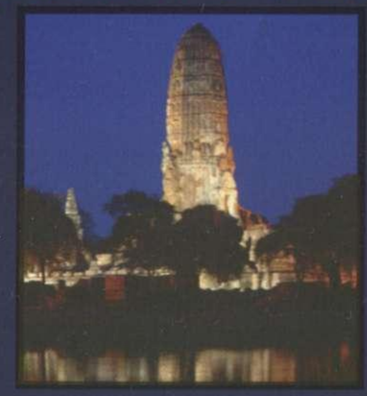




Phra Mongkhon Bophit, a large bronze cast Buddha image, was originally enshrined outside the grand palace to the east. King Songtham commanded it to be transferred to the west where it is currently enshrined and covered with a Mondop. During the 2nd fall of Ayutthaya, the building and the image were badly destroyed by fire. The one currently seen is a reconstruction. The open area northeast of the Sanctuary (Wihan) was formerly Sanam Na Chakkrawat where the royal cremation ceremony took place (this practice is now held at Sanam Luang, the Phra Men Ground of Bangkok).

WAT PHRA RAM

This monastery was situated outside the grand palace compound to the southeast. It was constructed by the royal command of King Ramesuan on ground where the royal cremation ceremony for his father, King Uthong, took place, A big lagoon in front of this monastery was originally named "Nong Sano" latterly "Bung Phra Ram", and currently "Phra Ram Public Pak" Wat Phra Ram is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.



WAT MAHA THAT

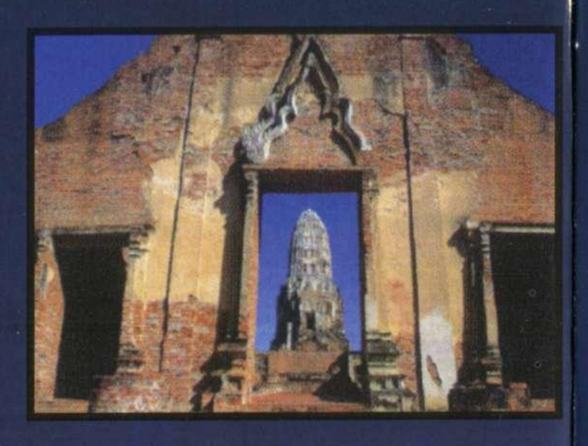
This temple is located in front of the grand palace to the east near Pa Than Bridge. It was constructed in the reign of King Borom Rachathirat I. It houses the holy relics of Lord Buddha.



Wat Mahathat is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.

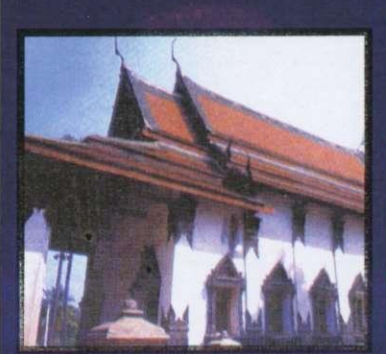
WAT RATCHABURANA

This monastery was located near Pa Than Bridge opposite Wat Maha That. King Borom Rachathirat II (Chao Sam Phraya) commanded that two pagodas be built on the ground where Chao Ai and Chao Yi engaged in single-handed combat on elephant back, and both were killed. Later, he established a Wihan combined with the Prang nearby and upgraded it to a monastery. Wat Ratchaburana is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.



WAT SENASANARAM

This ancient monastery named "Wat Sua" is behind Chantharakasem Palace. The main attractions are two Buddha images : Phra Samphuttha Muni, the principal image enshrined in the Ubosot, and Phra In Plaeng enshrined in the Wihan : both were transferred from Vientiane.



WAT SUWANDARARAM RATCHA-WORAWIHAN

Formerly called Wat Thong, this monastery is located in the southeast near Pom Phet, it has been renovated by almost every king of the Chakri Dynasty, because it is the royal monastery of the dynasty.

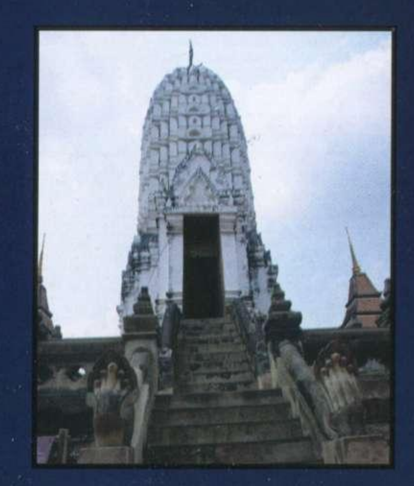
WAT SUAN LUANG SOP SAWAN

This monastery is in the west of the city island. It was built by the royal command of King Maha Chakkraphat in the royal garden compound adjacent to the original area of Wat Sop Sawan after the royal cremation of Queen Suriyothai. A large strupa covered with gold leaf called "Chedi Si Suriyothai" was built on the cremation ground as her monument.

WAT LOKAYASUTHARAM

This monastery is behind the grand palace adjacent to Wat Worachettharam. It is acccessible by the road behind the ancient palace, passing Wat Worapho and Wat Worachettharam. It has a large reclining Buddha, made of brick and covered with plaster, approximately 42 meters long. Many large hexagonal pillars of the Wihan near the image can still be seen.

WAT PHUTTHAISAWAN





This monastery is located on the riverbank opposite the city island to the south. Constructed in the area where King Uthong and his subject first migrated for the establishment of a new city of Ayutthaya, it was formerly called "Wiang Lek".

WAT CHAIWATTHANARAM

This is another monastery located on the same riverbank as Wat Phutthaisawan but to the west of the city island . It was built by the royal command of king Prasat Thong. The existing



main Prang and pagodas around the corners are still in good shape. Wat Chaiwatthanaram is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.

CHAO SAM PHRAYA NATIONAL MUSEUM

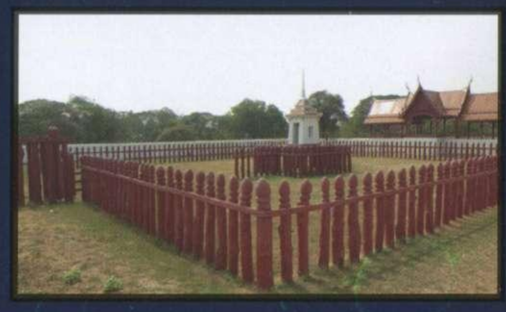
The museum is located on Rochana Road, opposite the Tourism Authority of Thailand office.It exhibits various antiques, Buddha images and famous carved panels. A receptacle in the Mondop contains the relics of Lord Buddha and objects of art more than 500 years old. The museum also has a substantial collection of local artifacts. It is open everyday except Mondays, Tuesday from 09.00-16.00 hrs. Admission is 30 baht.



AYUTTHAYA HISTORICAL STUDY CENTER

Located on Rochana Road, this center is a national research institute devoted to the study of Ayutthaya, especially during the period when Ayutthaya was the capital of Thailand. The Center is responsible for the museum of the history of Ayutthaya which exhibits reconstructions from Ayutthaya's past. The Center also supports an information service and a library containing historical materials about Ayutthaya. Open everyday from 09.00-16.30 hrs. For more details please contact tel. (035) 245123-4 , admission is 100 baht.

ELEPHANT KRAAL PAVILION



The pavilion, utilized as the royal seat to witness the elephant roundup, is located in Tambon Suan Phrik, Amphoe Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya. Its appearance is that of a big cage surrounded by logs having, from the front center, fencing lines of 45 degrees spread out to both sides far away into the jungle area. Around the kraal itself is an easthern wall with bricks to the height of the top of the logs. Behind the kraal and opposite the front fencing line is the pavilion housing the royal seat. The kraal currently seen was renovated in 1988 by the government.

NAKHON LUANG BUILDING



This building is on the east bank of Pa Sak River, Tambon Nakhon Luang, Amphoe Nakhon

Luang. It was used as the royal accommodation during trips to the Buddha's Footprint Shrine. It is assumed to have been constructed during the reign of King Songtham and improved to be a brick and plaster accommodation during the reign of King Prasat Thong.



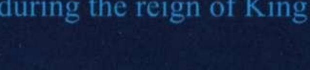
WAT NA PHRA MEN

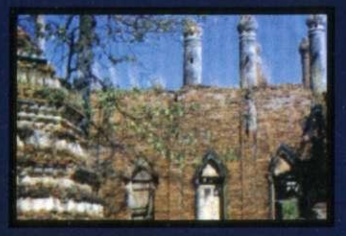
The former name of this monastery was Wat Phra Merurachikaram. It is located on the bank of Khong Subua opposite the grand palace. The Ubosot design is of early Ayutthaya style. The most interesting objects are the principal Buddha image, fully decorate in regal attire, and another ancient Buddha image made of stone in the small Wihan. It is open everyday from 08.00-17.00 hrs. Admission is 20 baht.



WAT PHUKHAO THONG

Located two kilometers northwest of the grand palace, this monastery was constructed in the year 1387 during the reign of King Ramesuan.





WAT KUDI DAO

Located in front of the railway station to the east, this old monastery is beautifully decorated, with better craftsmanship than many other temples.



WAT SAMANAKOT

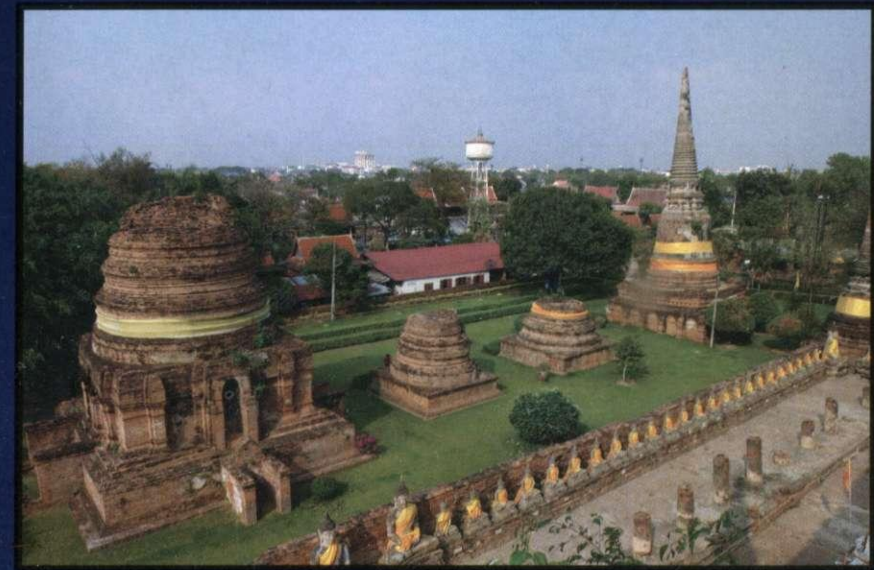
Located near Wat Kudidao, it

was renovated by Chao Phraya Kosa (Lek) and Chao Phraya Kosa (Pan) during the reign of King Narai the Great. The main attraction is a large Prang of a special style.

WAT YAI CHAIMONGKHON

This monastery, constructed during the reign of King Uthong, is located outside the city to the southeast in the same direction as the railway station. One can see its large pagoda from far away. King Naresuan the Great commanded that the pagoda be built to celebrate the victory of his combat on elephant back, He also intended a huge construction to match the large pagoda of Wat Phukhao Thong, and named it "Phra Chedi Chaimongkhon" It is open everyday from 08.00-18.00 hrs. Admission is 20 baht.





ROYAL FOLK ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTRE AT BANG SAI

Open every day (no demonstrations on Monday from 08.00-16.30 hrs. Admission is 100 baht tel. (035) 366-091-2. With and area of 285 rai (14 acres) , the Centre is located in Tambon Chang Yai, Amphoe Bang Sai. Farmers from Ayutthaya as well as from other provinces can receive training in folk arts and crafts here. At this centre you can have a glimpse of how farmers in the four regions live and work, and how local arts and crafts are produced. The centre is under the Foundation of Supplementary Occupations and Related Techniques (SUP-PORT) which was established under royal patronage on 21 July 1976. Products and activities which can be seen here are:

- ***Fern basketry***
- ***Weaving basketry***
- ***Hand-woven silk and cotton***
- ***Silk dyeing***
- ***Woodcarving***
- ***Miniature handmade Thai dolls***
- ***Furniture making***
- ***Textile products***





All the products are sold at the Centre and in every branch of Chitralada Stores.

In order to get to Bang Sai, one can take a river cruiser or a bus from the Northern Bus Terminal on Kampheng Phet Rd. Buses leave every 30 minutes from 05.30-18.00 hrs. Tickets

are 25 baht for an air-conditioned bus and 17 baht for a non air-conditioned bus. By car, take Bang Sai-Sam Khok Road, which branches off about 18 kilometers from Bang Pa-In Intersection.

POINTS OF INTEREST IN THE ROYAL FOLK ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTER AT BANG SAI

Sala Phra Ming Khwan (the main building) is a well modified Thai-style building, a structure with four gable ends. This four-storey building presents an impressive profile from its location in the middle of the Centre's grounds. The ground floor is wher arts and crafts products from the Bangsai Arts and Crafts Centre and other arts and crafts centres across the country are on sale. The first and second floors exhibits the outstanding products of the Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centrue, while the third floor is to be used as a conference room, and the basement to be used for storage.



Arts and Crafts Village Combines many traditional houses in different styles of architecture from all over Thailand. The village is a permanent place for display and demonstrates Thai arts and culture, such as way of life, folk shows and plays.



The Bird Park consists of two large cages containing many species of rare birds. The interior of the cages has been designed to

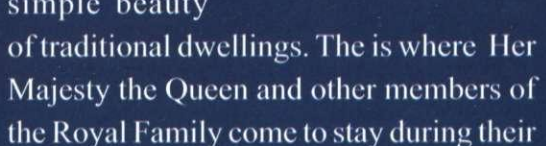


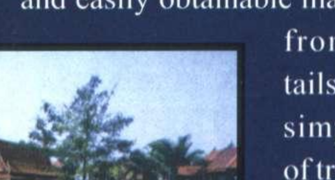
simulate nature, with a waterfall, folwing stream, and a cable bridge permitting visitors to view the birds at close range from the top of the cage. Admission is 10 baht.

Wang Pla (Freshwater Aquarium) is the largest fresh-water aquarium in Thailand. Visitors just cross the Octahedral Skylight, then come to the entrance of the aquarium where a corridor brings visitors around the big kid-ney-shaped tank to explore the freshwater environment. A variety of freshwater organisms live in the Chao Phraya River system, the main blood vessels of the northern and the central plains of the country. The cylindrical tank contains the most fierce freshwater carnivore fishes found in Thailand. Admission is 20 baht.



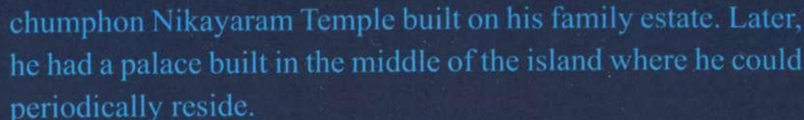
The Royal Lodge is a Central Thai-style structure made of local and easily obtainable materials. The from and details reflect the simple beauty of traditional dwellings. The is where Her Majesty the Queen and other members of the Royal Family come to stay during their visits to the Centre. The environment are adorned with flowers and bushes and an enchanting artificial waterfall.





BANG PA-IN

Bang Pa-In is one of Ayutthaya's districts. It lies 58 kilometers north of Bangkok by rail, 61 kilometers by road. Bang Pa-In is famous for its royal palace which attracts many tourists. Originally, there was a riverine island. When King Prasat Thong became the Ayutthaya's king (1630-1655) , he had the



chumphon Nikayaram Temple built on his family estate. Later, he had a palace built in the middle of the island where he could periodically reside.

The palace, surrounded by a lake 400 meters long and 40 meters wide, and the Chumphon Nikayaram Temple are all that remain of King Prasat Thong's construction work at Bang Pa-In Palace was used as country residene by every Ayutthaya monarch after King Prasat Thong. But when the new capital was extablished in Bangkok, Bang Pa-In Palace Was deserted for 80 years. It was only during King Rama IV's reign (1851-1868) that Bang Pa-In Palace was again visited by kings. King Rama IV stayed there and had a house built in the old palace compound. His son, King Rama V (1868-1910) liked the place, stahed there every year and constructed the royal palace as it is seen.

Bang Pa-In Island is located 40 kilometers from the city island of Ayutthaya. To access Bang Pa-In from Ayutthaya, one can go by Phahonyothin Road and make a right turn at km. 35 for 7 kilometers to the Bang Pa-In Palace.

It is open everyday between 08.00-16.00 hrs. Admission is 100 baht. For more details, please contact tel. (035) 261044, 261935



PHRA THINANG (Royal Residence) AISAWAN THIPHAYA AT (The divine seat of personal freedon)

PHRA THINANG AISAWAN THIPHAYA AT is a Thai-style pavilion with four porches and a spired roof built by King Chulalongkorn in the middle of an outer pond in 1876. It is a copy of the Phra Thinang Amphonphimuk Prasat in the Grand Palace, which was built by his father ,King Mongkut, as a pavilion for changing regalia before mounting a palanqin. King Chulalongkorn named this building Aisawan Thiphaya At after King Prasat Thong's original pavilion. This pavilion now houses a bronze stature of King Chulalongkorn in the uniform of a Field Marshal which was set up by his son King Vajiravudh (Rama VI).



PHRA THINANG (Royal Residence) WAROPHAT PHIMAN (Excellent and shining heavenly abode)

PHRA THINANG WAROPHAT PHIMAN is a Neo-Classic style, onestorey mansion built by King Chulalongkorn in 1876 as his residence and throne hall. The audience chambers and anterooms are decorated with oil paintings depicting significant events in Thai history and scenes from Thai literature. The series of historical paintings was commissioned by King Chulalongkorn is 1888. The private apartments of this building, which are located in the inner palace section, are still used by Their Majesties whenever they reside at the palace.



PHRA THINANG UTHAYAN PHUMISATHIAN (Garden of the secured land)

PHRA THINANG UTHAYAN PHUMISATHIAN was the favourite residence of King Chulalongkorn when he stayed at



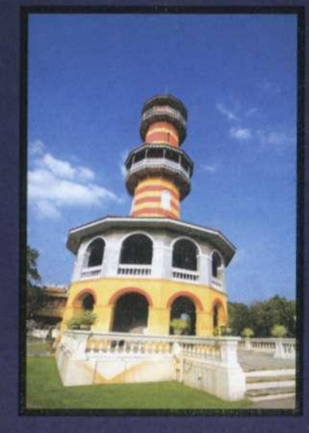
the Bang Pa-In Palace, sometimes as often as three times a year. Builtin 1877 of wood in the style of a two-storey Swiss chalet, the mansion was painted in two tones of green. In the words of Prince Ookhtomsky, a Russian officer who accompanied the Czarevitch, the future Czar Nicholas II of Russia. On a visit in 1890 it was "furnished luxuriously and with refined taste and comfort" Unfortunately, while undergoing minor repairs it was accidentally burnt down in 1938. Nowadays the new building was constructed by Queen Sirikit's command. The water tank, disguised as a crenellated Neo-Gothic tower, has remained.



PHRA THINANG (Royal Residence) WEHART CHAMRUN (Heavenly Light)

This Chinese-style two-storey mansion was built by the equivalent of the Chiness Chamber of Commerce and presented to King Chulalongkorn in 1889. Prince Ookhtomsky recorded that, "It is really a palace of romance, with ornamented tiled floors, massive ebony furniture, gold, silver, and porcelain freely used for decorative purposes, and delicate fretwork on the columns and on the windows. Evidently we have before us the principal sight of Bang Pa-In. The Emperor of China himself can scarcely have a palace much finer than this."





Ho (Tower) WITHUN THASANA (The sages lookout)

The observatory was built by King Chulalongkorm in 1881 as a lookout tower for viewing the surrounding countryside.

THEATRE

This theatre was constructed by the royal command of King Rama VI in the compound of his consort's living quarters, near the pond in the garden west of Utthayan Phumisathian Hall.

MEMORIAL TO QUEEN SUNAND AKUMARIRATANA

In 1881 Queen Sunandakumariratana drowned when her boat sank in the Chao Phraya River while she was on her

way to Bang Pa-In Palace. King Chulalongkorn, overcome with grief, set up a marble obelisk as a cenotaph to her memory. The King composed the dedication himself in Thai and English.

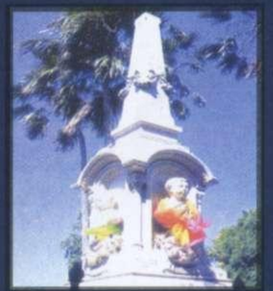
MEMORIAL TO PRINCESS SAOVABHARK NARIRATANA AND THREE ROYAL CHILDREN

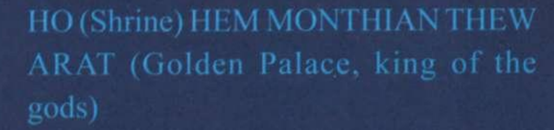
In the year 1887 the Princess Saovabhark Nariratana, a consort of King Chulalongkorn, and three of his children died, so the king had a marble cenotaph bearing their portraits built for them near the earlier Memorial to Queen Sunandakumariratana.



SAPHAKHAN RATCHAPRAYUN (Assembly Hall for royal relatives)

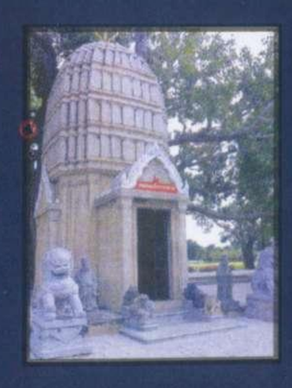
As its name implies, this colonial-style two-storeyed structure was built is 1879 to house King Chulalongkorn's brothers and their suites.





HO (Shrine) HEM MONTHIAN THEW ARAT (Golden Palace, king of the gods)

Ho Hem monthian Thewarat is a small stone struchure in the form of a Khmer-style Prasat (residence of a king or god with a corncob-shaped superstructure) built by King Chulalongkorn in 1880 and dedicated to King Prasat Thong of



Ayutthaya, the literal translation of Whose name is King of the Golden Palace, because a miniature Khmer-style Prasat of gold was discovered during his reign.

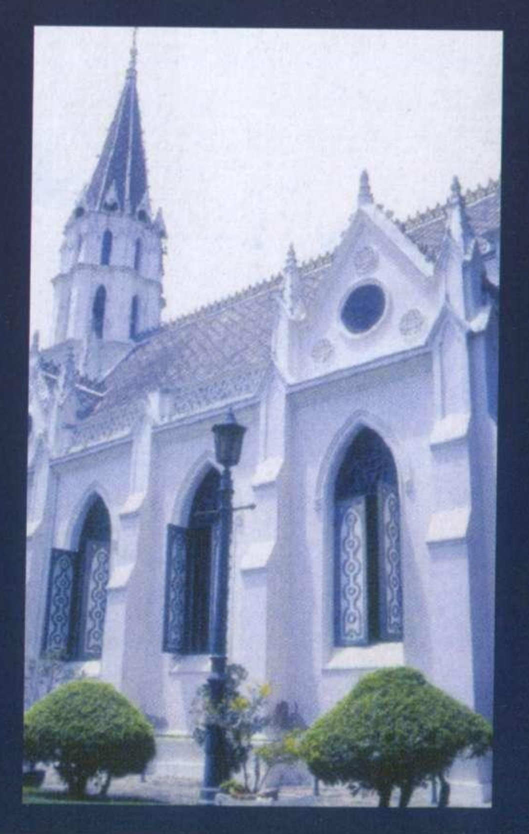
WAT CHUMPHON NIKAYARAM

This monastery at the end of the island near the bridge linking the railway station was constructed by the royal command of King Prasat Thong in the year 1632. It was built on his family estate.



WAT NIWETTHAM-MAPRAWAT

Another monastery outside the island on the southern side opposite the palace was constructed by the royal command of King Rama V in the year 1878. Its design, distinguished from other monasteries, is of Gothic art and it was of the Thammayutti order of monks.



Special Events

Bang Sai Arts & Crafts Fair
Late January

The annual fair held at Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre displays products of H.M. the Queen's SUPPORT programmer, which are for sale, and there are exhibitions and demonstrations of local products. Folk performances of song and dance enliven the fair.

Songkran Ferstival
April 13-15

The traditional Thai New Year is the Songkran water festival. Anyone who ventures out on the streets is likely to get a thorough soaking, but all in a spirit of fun at the peak of the hot season. Special events are held in front of Wihan Phar

Mongknon Bophit.

Bang Sai Loi Krathong Festival November

Bang Sai Arts and Crafts Centre holds a special Loi Krathong evening. Celebrations include making traditional floats (krathong) and beauty contest, handicraft demonstrations, exhibitions , and krathong launching in the river.



AYUTTHAYA CITY MAP



How To Get There

By Rail

Trains leave from Bangkok's Hua Lamphong Railway Station. Call 0-2220 4334 or Hotline 1690 for more information.

By Bus

From Bangkok Bus Terminal on Kamphaeng Phet II Road (Tel. 0-2963-2852-66) , air-conditioned buses leave for Ayutthaya every half-hour from 5.30 a.m. to 7.20 p.m. Non-air-conditioned bused leave for Bang Pa-in, Bang Sai and Ayutthaya many times daily from 5.30 a.m. to 7.20 p.m.

By Car

Take Highway 1 (Phahonyothin Road.) then take Highway 32 to Ayutthaya.



Special thank to:

Tourism Authority of Thailand

For more information please contact :

- Tourism Authority of Thailand Center Region Office : Region 6 Tel. 0-3532-2730-1, 0-3524-6076-7 (e-mail : tatyutya @tat.or.th)
- Tourism Authority of Thailand Call Center (TAT Call Center) 1672
- www.tat.or.th e-mail : center@tat.or.th




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